TOWN
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HURCH

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No. 107
May, 1955

PACIFIC SCHOOL OF RELIGION

God and Gardeners

MARK RICH

And the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden. . . .
And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden.

• At a recent meeting of a men's garden club, a college professor made a statement which must have made a deep impression upon everyone there. He said simply, "There are no atheists among gardeners." That was all, he did not amplify it, and no one challenged it. We had some thoughts for Rural Life Sunday, when the work of gardeners and sowers the world over is recognized.

Production

The gardener does not tear down anything. He builds up the soil. He cultivates flowers and produces food. He wants to see things develop and grow. He is in the business of creating, improving, and building.

Anyone who seeks to build puts himself in a state of mind to sense the presence of God, the great builder and architect of the universe. God is the most constructive worker of all, and he is always a friend of those who work for good purposes.

Sharing

"Every gardener is a sharer," said another layman at the garden club meeting. He enlarged this idea, saying: "Walk into a gardener's patch and admire the fruits of his labor and you will walk away with an armful of vegetables or flowers." It is rare for a gardener to grow things only for himself. He usually has a family in mind. The first rose is eagerly admired by the whole family. Friends may learn about it and when the blooms become profuse, filled vases will adorn tables in many houses. The generosity of those who grow things has become proverbial.

The grower responds to the hunger of people all over the world. His heart goes out to anyone in want. He seeks to share.

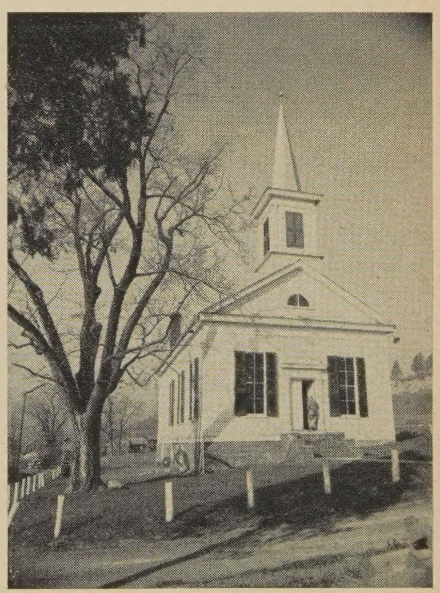
From long ago we have learned that one of the avenues to God is through the love of one's neighbor. He who shares with his neighbor is demonstrating a love that leads him toward God.

"The Plus Factor"

There is always something added to the gardener's work. A gardener plows, fertilizes, plants, weeds, hoes and sprays. When he adds all of these together, the total is hard work. But there is always another factor which adds something to his pains and labor. Through the alchemy of nature the little tomato seed becomes a sturdy plant bearing dozens of luscious red fruit. The strawberry plant clinging tenaciously to the earth produces blossoms and sweetness compacted in a red berry. So, in manifold and wonderful ways, the seed and the cutting yield a harvest that man's work alone does not account for. Something has been added to his labor.

The gardener knows that neither he nor his neighbors have added the plus factor. Even the plant scientist,

(*Continued on Page 2*)



"Old Kingsport" Church
Kingsport, Tennessee

Photo by Eva Luoma

the extension agent and the wisest gardener must depend upon the divine goodness for his extra reward for their labors. This usually leads to a reverance for the great Creator.

The Miracle

The gardener lives with perpetual miracles. He sees effects which surpass all human powers to achieve. Never a spring comes but he thinks about it, and with the growing and ripening crops he is always reminded of a power far beyond him.

He is in touch with something creative. He knows that the soil, the seed, the sunshine, rain and temperature all play a part in it but the fact of growth and reproduction always fill his heart with amazement.

When the professor said that there are no atheists among gardeners, I think he meant that anyone working with natural forces in the creating of beauty and food comes under the direct influence of God.

When God comes into a man's life, he does with it what is done in the garden. The horizons of the man's mind widen and his ability to take others into the fold of his interest enlarges. He grows in all ways to become a true child of God.

It is not strange that the early writer pictured God placing man in a garden and God walking in the garden. Let all who till the soil find Him as the companion of their lives.

Next Issue

• The next issue of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH will be dated September 1955. We do not publish during June, July or August.

International Conference on the Church and Rural Life

• Plans are being made to hold a second International Conference on the Church and Rural Life at the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches, Chateau de Bossey, Celigny (near Geneva), Switzerland, the latter part of August, 1956.

The conference will be under the auspices of the Ecumenical Institute in cooperation with the church agencies of other nations. In America the Department of Town and Country Church of the National Council of Churches is carrying the responsibility for promotion.

It is estimated that approximately fifty persons will participate in this conference, of which fifteen or twenty will be from the United States. Because the number that can be accommodated is extremely limited, it is necessary for any person who wishes to attend the conference to obtain approval from the executive director of Town and Country Church work of his denomination or (if the denomination does not have such an official) from the executive of his Board of Home Missions.

A travel seminar of about ten days will precede the conference when the American group will interview leaders in rural life and agriculture, and visit outstanding rural parishes. From previous experience it is estimated that the total cost from New York (round trip) will be about $1,000 per person.

Details on tour plans and travel arrangements will be furnished only after official denominational approval.

1955 Convocation

• The 1955 National Convocation on the Church in Town and Country will be held at Springfield, Massachusetts, October 18-20, instead of October 25-27, as previously stated.

An outline of the program for this Convocation and detailed information regarding registration and housing will be published in the September issue of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH.

Church and Soil

GORDON THORPE

• Three considerations make it inevitable that the Christian Church must concern itself with conservation.

The first of these is that God made everything good.

It is a distinctly Christian and Biblical viewpoint to consider the world and the things in it as good rather than evil. Most Greek philosophy, which incidentally colors most of our western world's thought, considers matter and things as evil. Many other religions look on the human body and the world as bad or sinful. To them the only hope of man is to escape the world to enter the realm of the spirit, which alone is good. But the Bible says, that God looked at everything He had made, and behold, "it was very good." "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, The world and they that dwell therein." (Ps. 24:1) The world, the soil, the land is good. God made it that way. We should think of it in that way. We should keep it that way.

The second consideration is that man has been placed as a steward over what God has made.

The Bible places great emphasis upon good stewardship. Unjust, unfaithful and poor stewards are condemned again and again in scripture. God has made us stewards over the things He has made. In Genesis 1:26 God said, "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." When God created Eden He placed the first man and woman in the garden to till it and keep it. Man still holds the world in trust. Man is a steward of all which God has made.

The third consideration which makes it inevitable that the church be concerned with conservation is that God is intimately concerned with man's material welfare.

When God placed man on the earth, He did not throw him completely on his own. God continues to watch over His children. "God makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt. 5:45) In the text from which I read, God shows His concern for His people's material welfare. The people in question were being led captive to a strange land. God told them that they should build houses, plant gardens, and seek the welfare of the city to which they were going. God is eternally concerned with the material welfare of the human race.

As far as I know, true Christianity has never sought to save a man's soul while letting his body rot. Real Christianity looks on man as having a body *and* a soul, *both* of which are important to God. That is why Christian missionaries carry not only Bibles, but bring with them also spades, medicine, teachers, clothing, tractors and bulldozers.

It is not necessary for me to point out how directly man's material welfare is bound to the soil. You know that when our soil is gone, so is our material security. And God is profoundly interested in Man's material welfare.

These three theological considerations make it imperative that the Christian church concern itself with conservation.

—*Soil Conservation* of U.S.D.A.

Your Harvest Festival

• The 1955 Order of Service for a Harvest Festival, which is published annually by the Department of Town and Country Church of the National Council of Churches, will be available by August 15. It may be obtained from denominational boards or from the Department of Town and Country Church, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

Photo by Eva Luoma

National Conference on Rural Health

• The tenth National Conference on Rural Health was held in Milwaukee, February 24-26, under the sponsorship of the American Medical Association. The program was planned around four main topics: farm and home safety, family responsibility for health, using available health and medical care resources, and how the job is done. More than five hundred participants in the conference showed real proof of their constant and vital interest in their work by their continued discussions among themselves long after the discussion sessions were over.

One of the striking aspects of the conference was its deep personal basis—the feeling that the participants were not talking about "problems" or "goals" or "programs" but about people, the rural people whose work is the mainstay of the entire nation's well-being. The accent was first of all on individuals, then families, then communities. The individual man's responsibilities and tasks were foremost, while the family unit was stressed as the starting-point for cooperative effort on other levels.

The opening session provided a keynote for this theme when Dr. F. S. Crockett, chairman of the Council on Rural Health, said "it is everyone's responsibility to take the best possible care of himself when well." Dr. Crockett said what physicians really want is "a voluntary, working partnership with the people, especially rural people."

Graphic illustration of the "personal angle" was seen in the session on farm and home safety. Ordie Hogsett, farm safety extension specialist from the University of Illinois, sat quietly waiting his turn to speak. Asked why he was so interested in farm safety, Hogsett held up his left arm, with no hand, and his right hand with two fingers missing.

"Corn picker accident," he explained. Accidents, according to the participants, are a major problem for farm people and physicians. Safety panel speakers agreed that farm accidents can be reduced only if all farm people "think, talk, and act 'safety.'" Farmers must remember that accidents do not always happen to "the other fellow." They must first check for hazards, then remove them, and finally, use constant care to avoid accidents.

Dr. Henry A. Randel, Fresno, Calif., regional director, said he was concerned about the fact that the years of life have been lengthened, but that too frequently there is nothing to fill them. Older farm people, like those in cities, need work and activities in which they are interested, to keep the later years from being a burden rather than a blessing.

Two attention-getting talks were those given by Joseph Banach, safety director of Ansul Chemical Company, Marinette, Wis., and Alfretta Dickinson, home advisor from the University of Illinois. Banach gave a working example of how rural communities and small towns can increase their medical services at no cost by establishing skilled rescue teams who work with doctors and others in emergencies.

Banach said an eight-man rescue team formed at his plant offered its services to the town but met with "widespread reluctance to accept us at face value." Then an accident injuring twenty-eight persons—all but two of them teen-agers—showed the town how the squad could work. He said they now feel "this is a practical idea . . . it makes sense."

Dr. Leonard W. Larson, member of the A.M.A. Board of Trustees, praised rural communities for their work in improving facilities and in acting together to influence doctors to locate in their areas. "Albert Schweitzer, the great humanitarian and physician, has said that an optimist is a person who sees a green light everywhere, while a pessimist sees only the red stop light; but the truly wise person is color-blind. I believe we are on a one-way through street to better rural health. An occasional red light may stop us temporarily, but the experience of the past decade will point the way. God grant that together we will have the strength and enthusiasm to carry on."

Rural Life Conference in New England

• The first of what are expected to be annual Rural Life Conferences for New Hampshire pastors was held February 15-16, 1955, at the University of New Hampshire, Durham. The conference was sponsored by the New Hampshire Council of Churches, the Diocesan office of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, and the University Extension Service. About forty persons attended, several staying overnight in the new rooms available at the University for small groups.

The speakers—who were obtained from the University, the Soil Conservation Service, the State Bankers Association, and the State Planning and Development Commission—placed emphasis on the needs in New Hampshire. The purpose of the conference was to obtain a better understanding of the material and social needs and resources of the state in order to minister to them with the guidance and encouragement of the spiritual powers which undergird all aspects of life.

The committee for the conference included the Rev. Walter P. Brockway, Congregational Life Minister of Hebron; the Rev. J. Desmond O'Connor, St. Thomas More Church, Durham; Professor Max F. Abell, President of the New Hampshire Council of Churches; and Dr. Henry B. Stevens, director of the University Extension Service.

Professor J. Duane Squires of Colby Junior College spoke out of his historical research regarding the people of the state; and Miss Barbara Marshall told of her development of a small industry in Rockport, Mass. —The Sawhorse Studio.

The next annual conference will be held January 24-25, 1956, Professor Silas B. Weeks, Extension Economist, replacing Professor Abell on the committee.

• Wisdom is knowing what to do next; skill is knowing how to do it, and virtue is doing it.

—David Starr Jordan

Town & Country Church

Published monthly (except June, July, August) by the Department of Town and Country Church, Division of Home Missions, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

20c a copy; $1.50 a Year

Publication Office: Tenth and Scull Streets, Lebanon, Pa.

Editorial Office: 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at Lebanon, Pa., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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Contributors of articles to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH speak for themselves and not for the National Council of Churches or sponsoring organizations.

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Vachel Lindsay and the Village of God

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• In a house in Springfield, Illinois, only a few doors from a house that had been the home of Abraham Lincoln, Nicholas Vachel Lindsay was born on November 10, 1879. As Vachel Lindsay he became a visionary who sang unique songs. He idealized localism, and was forever singing of the Village of God. He was a complex person, and he suffered much as he sought truth and beauty. In the end the struggle proved to be too great for him and his body collapsed.

Truth and Beauty

When Mrs. Lindsay asked Edgar Lee Masters to write the biography of her late husband, who died in 1931, she wrote with fine perception:

"Much of Vachel's suffering was conditioned by his own personal endowment and special problems. To me it is a miracle that out of it, and it was always pain and darkness at the root, and unhealed wounds that grew deeper with the years, came not only the magnificent songs, the noble and valiant statement of truth and beauty, but, until time and physical weakness pulled him down with a sense of ultimate impending defeat, a gallantry and high spirits, a deep communion with ultimate primal joys, such as laughter, rhythm, the play spirit, the roots of the country in which he lived, its legend and meaning, the color and significance of the many streams that have gone into the making of it."

Vachel Lindsay also had, she wrote, "the ability to pierce below the shoddy and the temporal into the underlying reality, and to make clear to thousands of people, who are for that stronger and more aware, who could understand his idiom, his dramatizing of it for them; and he lifted them a step beyond their own dull plane, without realizing what had happend to them. It was a deeply sacrificial life, and a glorious one and it did not end in defeat."

Vachel Lindsay's father was a horse and buggy doctor in Springfield. Late in life he went around in his buggy in winter, covering his knees with a torn buffalo robe fifty years old. The ancestors came from that section of Kentucky from which also came the greatest man of the Middle West, Abraham Lincoln. Later Vachel Lindsay was to see a vision of Abraham Lincoln walking at midnight, in Springfield, and he translated the vision into one of his famous poems. There were apparently few bonds of understanding between the practical general pactitioner and his vagrant son who could not find a vocation and wrote reams of poems.

His mother, born Esther Catherine Frazee, was a lay leader in the Disciples denomination of her day, and was sent to the Edinburgh Conference in the early twentieth century. The Lindsays were prominent figures in the Disciples Church of Springfield, and Vachel Lindsay was proud to be a Campbellite. Lindsay's mother first taught him to read, and introduced him to Dante and Milton. Grimm's *Fairy Tales* he read over and over, and they fed the imagination of the boy who was to become a dreamer like William Blake and a sufferer like Poe.

Young Manhood

Lindsay went to Hiram College, but left it in 1900 without graduating. He was then to wander for ten years, including periods spent as an art student in New York and Chicago. For a time he wished to become a "Christian Cartoonist." When he sat with art students who drank beer, Lindsay sipped his sarsaparilla, but was known as tolerant of the sin of other students.

In 1905, at age 26, Lindsay made a tramping tour through the South. He lectured in Disciple churches, in Y.M.C.A.'s, or public schools. Often he would himself announce his lecture, and promote attendance. He was delighted when thirty-five or thirteen persons came to hear him.

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He delivered many a lecture in the South and West for prohibition, for pay, and this means sustained him through many years of insecurity. Masters sums up: "He hoped, he studied, he prayed, he wrote, he dreamed."

His attitude toward Springfield was far different from James Whitcomb Riley's relation to his enviornment. Riley was one of the best loved citizens of Indiana when he died. Lindsay was forever preaching at Springfield "Let not our town be large!" But Springfield was expanding over the good black earth in the race for bigness. For a time Lindsay issued "War bulletins" and distributed them by hand into the backyards of the citizens of the capitol of Illinois. To Springfield he was that son of the good doctor who wrote poetry and he was peculiar. Lindsay was often bitter in his unadjustment and protest against the rising urbanism and commercialism.

The Poems

Now for references to a few of the flood of poems. Johnny Appleseed was, of course, a character made to order for Lindsay. Wrote Lindsay in his *Collected Poems:* "Johnny Appleseed, whom I recommend to all men who love visions, was a man of lonely walking, a literal Swedenborgian all his days, distributing tracts when occasionally he met a settler. For the most part he was consoled by his personal visions in the wilderness. I am for Johnny Appleseed's United States." There are three poems "In Praise of Johnny Appleseed." The following lines may be representative:

Johnny Appleseed swept on
Every shackle gone,
Loving every sloshy brake,
Loving every skunk and snake,
Loving every leathery weed,
Johnny Appleseed, Johnny Appleseed . . .

Lindsay was a Jeffersonian. He admired Bryan, and Altgeld—"the Eagle that is Forgotten."

I brag and chant of Bryan, Bryan, Bryan,
Candidate for President who sketched a silver Lion . . .
When Bryan came to Springfield, and Altgeld gave him greeting . . .
Election night at midnight:
Day of Bryan's defeat.
Defeat of western silver,
Defeat of the wheat.

"Come, let us be bold with our songs," wrote Lindsay. In his *Collected Poems,* the title of Section I is "Nightingales." II, "Orations, College War-Cries, and Olympic Games." III, "Litany of the Heroes." IV, "Verses of an Especially Inscriptional Character." V, "Moon Poems." VI, "Incense, and Praise, and Whim, and Glory." VII, "Runes of the Road"—"Being rhymes that have to do with Adventure While Preaching the Gospel of Beauty." VIII, "Home Town." IX, "Politics." He also once noted: "I have put as much energy into reciting as a National League baseball player puts into grand-stand plays."

I want to go wandering. Who shall declare
I will regret if I dare? . . .
The soul of the eagle will call,
Whether he lives or dies:—
The cliff and the prairie call,
The sagebrush and starlight sing,
And the songs of my far-away Sangamon call. . . .

This on voting:

I am unjust but I can strive for justice.
My life's unkind, but I can vote for kindness.
I, the unloving, say life should be lovely.
I, that am blind, cry out against my blindness.

The following was apparently written in the Roman Catholic Church of Springfield; it contains one of his numerous references to St. Francis of Assisi, with whom Lindsay was often compared:

Arm me against great towns, strong spirits old!
St. Francis keep me road-worn, music-fed.
Help me to look upon the poorhouse bed
As a most fitting death, more dear than gold.

For those inclined to lose hope, he recommended a turn to little prairie towns:

Who can pass a village church
By night in these clean prairie lands
Without a touch of spirit power?

This was one of Lindsay's creeds: "The things most worth while are one's own hearth and neighborhood. . . . The children now growing up should become devout gardeners. . . . They should, if led by the spirit, wander over the whole nation in search of the secret of democratic beauty with their hearts, at the same time filled to overflowing with the righteousness of God."

His localism was mature, students of Lindsay remark. Willard Sperry once declared: "Only people who have strong local affection can be truly catholic and international." William Butler Yeats said Lindsay's lines had "earnest simplicity," and "strange beauty." Yeats remarked that Bacon had said: "There is no excellent beauty without strangeness."

(Vachel Lindsay's *Collected Poems* were published by the Macmillan Company, New York, 1930. Edgar Lee Masters' biography, *Vachel Lindsay,* was brought out by Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1935.)

4-H Clubs Bulwark of Korea

• Major General Charles W. Christenberry, president of the American Korean Foundation, recently described the 4-H Club movement in South Korea as the backbone of that country's agriculture.

"Fifteen million out of 22,000,000 people in South Korea are engaged in agriculture," he said. "The 75,000 youths in the 4-H Club program there are the backbone of this vital branch of Korea's economy and the future leaders of this young republic."

From Correspondence

Dear Editor:

In many ways I like your full coverage of organizations giving a very good picture of what's going on all over. This is an excellent way, I think, for all of us to react. We need to use existing organizations and cooperate with them to a large extent. You are doing this very effectively.

—Michael P. Dineen
Executive Secretary
National Catholic Rural
Life Conference

American Farm Bureau Federation

The Farm Bureau is an independent, non-governmental organization of farm people.

The American Farm Bureau Federation represents 1,609,461 farm families in 48 states and Puerto Rico. There are more than 20,000 community Farm Bureaus, and some 2,500 county Farm Bureaus.

The Federation is organized in every state of the union and is the only nationwide, general farm organization in the United States.

It is a voluntary organization supported by membership dues.

Each member joins the organization of his own volition and pays his dues on the basis he wants to belong to Farm Bureau.

There is no checkoff provision for the collection of dues at any level in the Farm Bureau.

Policies of the national organization are determined at the annual meeting by voting delegates from the state Farm Bureaus, when they agree on a set of resolutions which become the policy of the organization for the ensuing year. Action of executive officers, Board of Directors, and staff must conform to these resolutions.

Voting delegates to the annual meeting are selected by the state Farm Bureaus. Number of delegates is proportionate to the size of the membership in each state.

President and Vice-President are elected biennially by the delegate body as a whole. Nominations are made from the floor of the convention.

The American Farm Bureau Federation represents producers of all Agricultural commodities. National commodity advisory committees advise the Board of Directors on special problems in the fruit and vegetable, livestock, field crops, dairy, and poultry fields. National conferences of producers of these commodities are held each year at the convention. The annual convention of the Associated Women also is held in conjunction with the A.F.B.F. convention.

Other meetings held at the same time are conferences on organization, young member activities, tax and legislative problems, farm safety, insurance, and cooperative services.

Cooperatives for Agriculture

• The annual summer session of the American Institute of Cooperation is being held this year at Purdue University, Lafayette, Indiana, August 7-11. With "Modern Cooperatives for Modern Agriculture" as the theme of the session, an interesting program on farmer cooperative business for both youth and adults is being planned.

Recognizing 4-H Club, county or district educational activities in connection with farmer cooperatives, the Institute again offers a wide range of special awards for every state. Last year, twenty-four states participated in the first annual award plan and sent representatives to the A.I.C. Summer Conference at Cornell University where they were introduced to the large audience and each was presented with a $50 Institute check. This award meant that each was regarded as the 4-H boy or girl most outstanding in cooperative activities in their state. The $50 was used to help defray travel costs. Similar awards will be made August 8 at the 1955 Institute at Purdue University.

For the second year, the Institute is seeking the outstanding Master's Thesis in the field of agricultural cooperation for the $500 E. A. Stokdyk Award. This graduate study must have been completed during the fiscal year of the Institute, July 1 to June 30, and must be submitted to A.I.C. headquarters, 744 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington 6, D. C. by June 15, to be included in the present contest.

Entries will be judged by a competent committee chosen from the Land-Grant colleges and universities. The student entering this contest must be enrolled in an accredited college or university, and at least three theses must be entered in the contest before a winner will be selected.

It is planned to make the 1955 Stokdyk Award at the Purdue Institute summer session.

Japan Forms Rural Christian Fellowship

• An increasing feeling of need for an interdenominational nation-wide, and even world-wide interchange and mutual support among Christian rural workers, has resulted in the planning of several area study conferences in the next two years by the National Christian Council's Department of Rural Evangelism. A study conference will be held in Hokkaido this May and another in the Tokyo area some time later in the spring. Through such "grass roots" study conferences as these, the basis for a nation-wide organizational conference of the Christian Rural Fellowship in Japan three years from now will be held.

In order to plan for these local meetings and evaluate what is being done in rural evangelism in Japan today, forty-five specialists, who are at present carrying on rural evangelism, gathered in Tokyo from all over Japan for two days of reports, discussion, and planning.

Mr. Katsube, the chairman of the National Christian Council's Department of Rural Evangelism introduced the theme of the meeting by reviewing the needs for intensified evangelism in rural Japan. Although farmers account for over half of the population of the country, they make up less than two per cent of the church membership.

It was reported that the National Rural Christian Service Training Center has now developed to the point where it has four lines of activity: a seminary, a course for training kindergarten teachers, a technical research and training section, and rural welfare institute. Four large rural centers are being developed in Hokkaido, Tohoku, Kwansai, and Kanto. Thirty-eight smaller prefectural rural centers and three fishing village centers are now actively at work. Leadership training conferences and Rural Gospel schools are part of the effort to increase the effectiveness of already existing groups.

• Please notify TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH of your change of address.

The Eternal Mountains

WESLEY A. HOTCHKISS

• Mountain climbing is really a theological exercise; a quest rather than a feat. That is why there is no reason for climbing mountains.

The mountains do not need a reason for being. They carry their own, locked deep in their granite fastness, and it is disclosed by revelation rather than logic. George Mallory's answer to the question of "why" he climbed Everest was not an answer at all but a statement of great faith: "Because it is there." He knew that somewhere in this mountain was a revelation of existence for him, if he could stay with it.

Neither is mountain climbing a conquest. Edmund Hillary expressed disappointment that the American edition of his account was titled "Conquest of Everest." He claimed only that it was an ascent. Those who have experienced the mountains know that only the climber is conquered; the mountain is still there.

Modern man needs the mountains to reveal the glory of the immortal God. Wordsworth could see God in a primrose, but modern man is so obsessed with his kilowatts per capita that only the intrinsic power of eternal mountains can get through to him that God is really the Creator.

Creation is Holy

Even more specifically, in terms of the Christian faith, Christ is in the mountains, for "He was in the beginning with God." The mountain climber is, therefore, engaged in a ritual when he experiences God in a transformed creation. When Christ became incarnate he revealed the holiness of the earth. By his grace we can participate with created things in the ritual of life. We can be *with* the mountains, not merely in their midst as a spectator.

This is the ineffable truth of life reaffirmed in the great dramas of Christian worship. Whenever bread is broken in sacrament or believers are baptized in water from the earth, or a man and a woman are united in matrimony, we declare our faith that creation is holy. Out of these profundities we can stand on a majestic summit and declare with the prophet of ancient Israel: *For the hand of the Lord will rest on this mountain.* The hope of the ancient prophet has been revealed and the mountaineer performs his ritual "Because it is there" by the grace of God through the Christ of Creation.

Small Tools Laboratory

• A small tools laboratory is being established at Wilmington College, Wilmington, Ohio, under the sponsorship of the Society for Social Responsibility in Science and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The purpose is to develop materials and production techniques for the local manufacture of small tools in the "newly developing countries." The F.A.O. has been encouraging endeavors of this sort. Wilmington College welcomes inquiries from engineers interested in working with the laboratory. Persons interested should address Samuel D. Marble, President of Wilmington College, Wilmington, Ohio.

—*The American Friend*

Resource Material on Theology and Rural Life

• A compilation of about 125 pages of mimeographed and printed resource material on Theology and Rural Life has been prepared for instructors in theological seminaries or others who are interested in such material. It was originally prepared for the consideration of a seminar which met in New York for two consecutive seasons. And because there were many expressions of interest, it was decided to duplicate the material and make it available to others.

This compilation consists of interpretations of the writings of theologians whose teachings have made mention of rural life; notes on rural sociologists who have analyzed the rural community; and papers on the synthesis of theology and rural sociology, or consideration of the relationship of the two.

This resource material on Theology and Rural Life may be obtained from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates:

Complete in snap-back binder, which may be used for additional relevant material—$2.00; collated material without binder—$1.00.

A Modern Oberlin

ROBERT MORAUSKI

• Eugene Smathers of Big Lick, Tennessee is a present-day Oberlin, choosing for his Ban-de-la-Roche the Cumberland plateau in the northern Tennessee hills.

Born in Bath County, Kentucky, December 4, 1907, the son of a tenant farmer, Mr. Smathers attended the one-room elementary school and later a two-teacher high school. It was from his father that he learned to love the soil and to have an intelligent concern for soil conservation.

Attending college worked a hardship on the entire family, but in 1929 Eugene was awarded an A.B. degree from Transylvania College, Lexington, Kentucky. Going on to Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, he graduated in May of 1932 with both the B.D. degree and a new bride, the former Loucile Boydston of Berryville, Arkansas. Of this marriage two children were born—Patricia Jean and Michael.

As with many a rural minister, the influences of men like Warren H. Wilson, Ralph Felton, Lewis Mumford and Baker Brownell played an important part in establishing his ideals.

Writing a pamphlet entitled "My Call from God," Eugene Smathers says his call to his work was in many respects like unto the call of Moses. A Godly home with a family altar, a concern for the poor on the land, and the feeling that Christ could use his abilities, pushed him ever on.

Canaan

For a Canaan, he chose Big Lick. There, in the low ebb of the depression he began working with his triad of souls, soil and society in the establishment of a new kingdom. However, like Moses, his ways were not readily accepted.

The educational method of outside professional ability gave way to self-study groups, credit associations, and other similar techniques. Conservation methods were introduced, fertilizer problems were studied and met, and a source of income was realized from tree culture.

So that it might be recognized that the church was penetrating the whole life of this community, activities were centered around the church. Soon, a new edifice was constructed, with pledged labor and funds, reflecting the love of the people.

In all avenues of life the need for new and better ways of overcoming life's handicaps have been met through study and cooperation.

The way has not been easy and new challenges are ever being met, but Big Lick is an example of what a man dedicated to doing God's will can do. Eugene Smathers is such a man, for no matter how humble the circumstances he feels as did Browning when he said:

All service ranks the same with God,
If now as formerly, He trode Paradise,
His presence fills our earth,
Each only as God wills can work,
His puppets best and worse are we,
There is no last nor first.

A drawing of a Paraguayan scene by a member of the Society of Brothers, of which an American unit is being established at Rifton, N. Y.

Bruderhof Community in America

• A beginning of a Bruderhof Community has been established at Woodcrest, Rifton, near Kingston, N. Y., where some seventy persons are now living. Nearly 1,000 people live together in such communities throughout the world. In England and North America they are ordinarily known as the Societies of Brothers. The group at Rifton engage in farming and also make and sell products of wood, mainly "educational toys."

A quarterly periodical, *The Plough,* is distributed from the community at Rifton. It is published by people of fifteen nationalities "who have lived and worked together for over thirty years in complete community and who maintain an open door for all those wishing to share a life of brotherhood." The aim of the periodical, subscription $2.50 a year, is "to unite more closely those who seek to live by the standards of justice, brotherhood, and peace, and it is sent out with the hope that it may bring about closer contact between seeking people in different parts of the world."

Colorado Rural Life Conferences

• Sponsored by the Colorado Council of Churches' Department of Town and Country Work, four Rural Life Conferences were held in the state during February and March. These conferences were held for the Northeastern, Southeastern, South Central, and Northwestern sections of the state. The theme was, "The Churches Working with Rural People for Better Living in Better Communities."

The Konnarock Story

BETTY WESTROM

• The sound of water rushing down over the rocks, the scent of the pine and hemlock trees which cloak the slopes of the mountains, the laurel-bordered roads which coil upward around old White Top—these are some of the things which make the area around Konnarock, Virginia, attractive and picturesque.

But there is nothing picturesque about some of the problems of the mountain area, and these, too, are a part of the Konnarock story.

The Konnarock story is a story of a church which takes seriously its task of building a Christian community—a church which gives a 20th Century interpretation to the three-fold preaching-teaching-healing ministry of Jesus.

From the Lutheran mission in the tiny village, hands of love reach in all directions up into the hills, bringing hope to the people in the humble homes which nestle in the hollows or cling to the steep sides of the mountains.

The Konnarock story is a story of many people—Sunday school children from Pennsylvania and church women from Minnesota—pastors from the Baltic countries and a doctor from Germany—men who gave up comfortable urban parishes for the rigors of mountain living—school teachers who sacrifice attractive salaries to give themselves in a spirit of love.

It is the story of the mountain people, who are learning about vitamins and health, self-reliance and stewardship, soil conservation and beauty, child care and the Gospel of Salvation.

How It Started

Not too many years ago, the village of Konnarock was the center for a lumbering enterprise which employed many men. The whole area hummed with activity. Within a very few years, however, only stumps were left of what was once valuable virgin timber, and in 1928 the lumber company pulled out, leaving mass unemployment and poverty in its wake.

The United Lutheran Church in America, which had been invited by the lumber company executives to establish a school and churches for the mountain people, recognized that it must concern itself with the total needs of the area's residents, and the work was expanded to include welfare and medical services.

Leadership

"Nerve center" for the mission enterprise is a modern, two-story office building in Konnarock. Dr. C. Ross Ritchie, a gray-haired, soft-spoken man, superintends the work with an air of quiet resolution. He must keep an executive eye on Konnarock Lutheran School; the Southern Mountain Church work, which includes twenty-two congregations in nine counties of southwest Virginia and western North Carolina; the Konnarock Medical center and an auxiliary health center; 1,200 acres of land; a community cannery; and a private telephone line and water system.

Dr. Ritchie came to the post just three years ago after serving a thriving parish at Lexington, North Carolina. Added to the traditional concerns of the pastor's pulpit and study, he finds that he must now consider such problems as broken fences and cattle disease, baby clinics and educational standards.

Built by the Women's Missionary Society of the United Lutheran Church in 1925, Konnarock Lutheran School has during its short history trained hundreds of mountain girls and boys, educating them to Christian usefulness in the mountain area.

The Mission

A large building at the foot of White Top mountain, two miles from the village, houses the academic classrooms and the girls' dormitory rooms. Shingled with chestnut bark, the building looks very much at home in its rustic surroundings.

The boys live in a rambling frame house in the village, formerly the home of a lumber company executive. Also in the village, perched on the side of a hill, is a big, nondescript wooden building which once housed St. Matthew's Lutheran Church and is now used as a workshop for manual training courses.

The required high school academic courses for the state of Virginia are taught at Konnarock Lutheran School. In addition there is emphasis on practical skills, Bible training, and music.

KLS training makes an impact on the entire community. Edgar Umbarger's agriculture courses train boys to engage in scientific farming. "Hob" Wyatt's instruction in the manual training courses prepares them to make furniture and souvenirs and apple ladders. Mr. Wyatt also superintends the mission's entire building program, making it possible for the men in the area to build churches and residences for the mission staff.

The average mountain home experiences a definite lift when the daughter of the household comes home from school, armed with knowledge about cooking, sewing, home decoration, home nursing, and health.

All the dishwashing, laundry, and other housekeeping tasks in the main school building are taken care of by the girls themselves. After breakfast the rooms and corridors are alive with singing as pretty girls in blue jeans do their morning chores.

Superintending operations in the kitchen is the genial cook, "Grandma" Church, who "just shut the doors and walked out" of her little white mountain home a year ago because she knew she could be of help to the school.

The boys have work to do, too. In addition to keeping their own dormitory clean, they are kept busy by the field crops, livestock, and the twenty-five-acre apple orchard.

The farm with 350 acres under cultivation or in pasture land, serves as a laboratory for the instruction in agriculture; and it also produces a large amount of food for the schools.

he farm is stocked with two work orses, 15 dairy cattle, 30 beef cattle, o sheep, 30 hogs, and 200 laying ens.

hristian Emphasis

Their morning work completed nd inspected, the girls go to their ooms to change from blue jeans nto school dresses. Soon a station agon pulls up at the back door, riven by Tom Blevins, a slim, good-atured KLS graduate who has rved for twenty-three years as echanical maintenance man for the ission. The boy students pile out f the station wagon and join the rls for morning chapel exercises.

The students take complete charge f the service, reading the Scripture sson, leading in the prayers, choos-ig the hymns, and presenting the rief, thoughtful meditations.

The value of KLS training can be en in the youngsters who graduate om the school. Boys and girls who me to the school as awkward, ightened children leave as poised oung men and women, ready to as-ime a role of Christian leadership the mountain area or go on to ollege to train for the professions.

he Medical Program

The church, sensing that a strong hristian community cannot exist nless its people are strong, deter-ined to provide first-class medical cilities for the Konnarock area. In 940 a house in Konnarock was con-erted into a modern medical center ith funds given by Lutheran young eople from all over the country rough their Luther League organ-ation.

It is not "horse and buggy" medi-ne which is practiced in the big hite house with the red shingled oof. On the first floor of the center re a waiting room, consultation oom, emergency ward room, X-ray oom, clinic room, laboratory, and iet kitchen.

At the head of the medical work nce its beginning has been Dr. einz Meyer, a refugee from Nazi ermany. Mrs. Meyer serves as office urse, assisting him in taking care f the patients who stream into Kon-arock from the entire Southern Mountain area for the morning and evening office hours.

As out-patient nurse, Sister Sophia Moeller has been responsible for delivering more than 300 babies without a fatality. Through the years hundreds of mountain people have come to the door of the little cottage which is the Helton Health Center, asking for help from the stout-hearted deaconess.

Education for Health

The most staggering problem, when the medical center was first established in Konnarock, was the problem of malnutrition. Large numbers of the mountain people were disabled by deficiency diseases. Disorders of the digestive tract and of the skin, emotional imbalance, and so-called "rheumatic complaints" resulting from improper diet had sapped their strength.

The first attempts by the medical center to do battle with this "hidden hunger" enjoyed only scant success. So a more direct approach was used. It became the official policy of the medical center to include a "lecture" on nutrition with every office or home call. A woman with tonsilitis, for instance, would leave the examining room with ten good reasons why she should grow more varieties of vegetables for her family table.

The principles of nutrition were put to work in every corner of the mountain area, with almost miraculous results. A survey of the farms taken only three years after the program went into effect revealed that thirty-four different kinds of vegetables were being grown and served on Konnarock tables.

A community cannery was set up, where women might come to learn methods for preserving vegetables and fruits so that no food value would be lost.

Patients are asked to pay what they can for medical treatment at the Center, and the healing work is virtually self-supporting.

Source of Strength

But none of the educational activities and mercy work at Konnarock is as important as the mission's first order of business, the saving of human souls. The twenty-two simple little churches scattered through the mountains are the project's real source of strength.

The hills are visited by "revival preachers" from the religious sects, but it is the Lutheran pastors who live among the people, giving them a solid, strengthening diet of continuous spiritual care.

New York Plans Program

• A three-point plan to strengthen Christian communities in rural and suburban areas across New York State was announced recently at a meeting of leaders in the Rural Church Institute of the New York State Council of Churches.

The proposed program calls for increased interdenominational activity, greater church cooperation with other community organizations, and a strengthening of lay participation and leadership in church affairs.

Held at Rural Church Institute headquarters on the Cornell University campus, the two-day meeting brought together clergy and lay leaders of denominational Town and Country committees. The Rural Church Institute is the Town and Country Division of the New York State Council of Churches.

Methods of achieving the "greater Christian community" aim include establishment of Town and Country Church Clinics, Christian Teaching Missions, and New Life Family Missions. Pilot studies in each of the three programs are planned for early fall. Rural or suburban churches in New York wishing to participate should contact the Rev. Stanley Skinner, Director of the Rural Church Institute, Cornell University, Anabel Taylor Hall, Ithaca, N. Y.

Bird With a Question

The robin keeps coming nearer
With his voice becoming clearer—
Means he is a friendlier bird
Than any I have ever heard?

—Rusticus

We Do It Together*

"Hello, hello, that you Bill?"

"Yes, this is Bill; it sounds like Dick. What's on your mind?"

"Say, Bill, we'd better get the men of the church together and plow that field for the church corn. It's a little wet yet after that rain last night, but it ought not to be too wet by noon today. What do you think?"

"It's O.K. with me, Dick. What about us phoning some of the boys? Who would you like to have me call?"

"Well, Bill, let's contact the Zone chairmen of the Men's Chapter and let them get in touch with the fellows in each Zone."

"That's a good idea. What time shall we tell them to come?"

"Right after dinner, Bill—say about one o'clock. We ought to be able to get that fifty acres plowed up by dark if we get enough help."

"Well, I'll see you out there, then. Better call the minister, too, Dick. He'll want to be there and take pictures, and help out."

"O.K., Bill, so long."

Preparing the Ground

It's after lunch now. From every direction they come—the Vail Presbyterian Church men with tractors and plows. From the top of the hill it looked like an army converging on the target for the final "kill." It was an army—a regiment in the army of the Lord, preparing the ground rented to the church by Tracy for our Church Farm project.

You should have seen the sight! Twenty-one tractors, nineteen plows, and as many men. Up hill, down hill, around the hill, they chugged along, humming, buzzing. The whole field was alive with activity. Talk about cooperation. This was it!

"Hi, Eddie! All set?"

"Yep. Just give me a little hand here, and I'm ready. Hope no one has an upset. Pretty steep in places, you know."

"Well, just be careful, Eddie."

"O.K., Dick."

"Well, there comes Bud, and Les, too. Now we can really 'go to town.' "

"Andrew said he'd come, too, Pastor."

"Oh, he'll be along soon, Dick. Don't worry. Looks as if there will be plenty of help. There come Frank and Jim now."

"Clyde and Harold have been up there over that hill plowing for an hour already."

"Some of the fellows have quite a way to come, Rev. Mease."

"Yes, as much as eight miles. That's a long way for a tractor, isn't it? Earl and Andy, and some others will be here. In fact there come some of them now. There's plenty of help, Dick, plenty! Who was it who said we couldn't handle this in addition to the annual cattle project?"

"Well, Rev. Mease, once they make up their minds to do anything, they always go all out for it and get the job done, you know."

"Yes, that's for sure. Just shows what can be done when we all get together to do it, Dick."

"By the way, Pastor, I don't believe Tracy knows we're out here today. Bill called him this morning, but he wasn't in."

"You mean the man who owns the land doesn't know what's happening out here today? I understand he was fearful of the job not getting done. He'll be surprised. I'll jump in my car and drive into town and see if I can't bring him out here. Anyway, I want a picture of Tracy and that sign."

"Why, hello, Tracy, how are things with you?"

"Oh, pretty good, Rev. Mease. Awful busy, you know."

"Listen, how about getting in my car for a few minutes and driving out to the church farm. I want you to see what they're all doing out there."

"You mean they're out plowing that ground up today? I didn't think they'd start so soon."

"Well, they are, Tracy, twenty-one tractors, and nineteen plows!"

"What?" That many out there? You're kiddin' now, aren't you?"

"No, sir, I'm definitely not kidding. Now climb right in my car and I'll take you out there and bring you back. It won't be long. Furthermore, I've got about everyone's picture out there but yours. Let's go."

"Sorry I can't take out that much time today, Pastor. Here's Gill, and I've got to take care of this deal with him!"

"Now, listen, Tracy, I need a picture of you out there with the fellows and with the sign, too. Just get Gill and bring him, too. I want him to see what's going on out there anyway. Both of you just get in the car and come along."

"But I'm not dressed for a picture."

"Dressed? Well, you got clothes on. That's all that's necessary for this kind of picture. Come along."

We drove to the church farm.

An Army for the Lord

"Well, What do you know! Look at that! They're really working out there aren't they, Mr. Mease?"

"Sure are, Tracy, and you couldn't afford to miss this sight! They figure they'll be through by 6:00 P.M."

"Just think of it, will you? I wouldn't have imagined these fellows getting together like that! This is really a great thing, Pastor. It does everybody a lot of good. Just never thought they'd get that much help. Why I even had some friends of mine, not church members, all lined up to come out here and help, but I didn't know they were going to plow like that today!"

"Just a minute, Tracy, stand over there behind that sign,

VAIL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH FARM

and I'll get your picture. Gill, you stand there, too. Hold it! There thanks."

"Well, Pastor, I've got to get back to town."

"O.K. Tracy. Get in the car."

"Just can't get over it, Mr. Mease Imagine all those fellows getting al that ground plowed already. Ain't i

* A Lord's Acre project as reported in the *Newsette*, put out by the Presbyterian Church of Vail, Westside, Iowa. The Rev. Frank R. Mease is minister of the church.

eally something to see a bunch of nen cooperate like that? Imagine! Plowing all that ground in one afternoon! Nineteen plows and twenty-one tractors, you say?"

"Yes, that's right. Just wanted you o see what's going on. Sure glad you ame out, Tracy. And you, too, Gill. Your church can do this, too, if they eally go after it."

"Well, thanks, Rev. Mease. Glad went out with you. Sure didn't ealize they'd get that much coopera-ion."

"Great thing, isn't it, Tracy? You eedn't worry about them getting he job done. They plan on discing nd planting tomorrow morning—nd they will, you know."

By two o'clock the next afternoon he whole job was completed. A vonderful demonstration in coop-ration among rural church people!

One Hundred Years of Service to Country

• The 100th anniversary of the pening of one of the great doors to American progress was observed at Michigan State College February 12. A year-long commemoration of the ounding of the nation's first agri-cultural college began on that date. Appropriately, it was also the birth late of President Lincoln, who igned the Morrill Act creating the ystem of Land Grant Colleges and Universities for which Michigan State College was the model.

You would have to turn many pages of history to find another event that had so many far-reaching effects. We usually think of these in terms of agriculture, for since 1855 agriculture in America has made more progress than in all the pre-ceding centuries. The trio of serv-ices which grew out of that begin-ning—the agricultural colleges, ex-periment stations and Extension Service—have had a key part in this revolutionary advance. They pro-vided the American farm family with the very aids needed for the continuous betterment of farming and farm living to which it aspired.

Our whole economy and high standard of living rest on the foun-dation of abundance that has re-sulted. But the nation owes still more to the Land Grant Colleges. The vast technical and scientific de-velopment of modern America has its roots back in the act that estab-lished them. Before then our col-leges and universities were serving only a few of the more scholarly professions such as the ministry, law and medicine. The Land Grant Col-leges broke down this narrow tradi-tionalism and opened up higher edu-cation to the broadening needs of the nation.

The centennial observance will not only look back upon a century of achievement but toward the fu-ture. A symposium on "Business in the Future" was held April 12-14. The Centennial of Farm Mechan-ization will be held August 15-20, portraying not only the development of farm equipment since 1855 but the present and future through dis-plays and demonstration. Ten gath-erings of leading scholars and scien-tists from all over the world will be held during the year. They will dis-cuss the questions and issues that will affect the course of human af-fairs in the period ahead.

The theme selected for the Cen-tennial year is, aptly, this quota-tion from Lincoln's Gettysburg Ad-dress: "It is for us the living . . . to be dedicated here to the unfinished work." There is much of it to be done and, on their record, we can expect the Land Grant Colleges to have a high part in its accomplish-ment.

—Reprinted from *Better Farming*

Honor and Homage to Pat McConnell

• Boston University's Professor Charles M. McConnell, for the past twenty-nine years professor of town and country church in the school of theology, was a recent guest of honor at a dinner in the school's refectory. All of the school's current student body and many of Professor McCon-nell's "old boys" turned up for the event. They plan to finance and establish a chair in his name when he retires from teaching next month.

Why Boys Leave Home

Why did you leave the farm, my lad?
Why did you bolt, and quit your dad?
Why did you beat it off to town
And turn your poor old father down?

Thinkers of platform, pulpit, press
Are wallowing in deep distress;
They seek to know the hidden cause
Why farmer boys desert their pa's.

Some say they long to get a taste
Of faster life and social waste;
Some say the silly little chumps
Mistake the suit-cards for the trumps.

In wagering fresh and germless air
Against the smoky thoroughfare.
We're all agreed the farm's the place;
So free your mind, and state your case.

His Answer:

Well, stranger, since you've been so frank
I'll roll aside the hazy bank,
The misty cloud of theories,
And tell you where the trouble lies.

I left my dad, his farm, his plow,
Because MY calf became HIS cow.
I left my dad—'twas wrong, of course—
Because MY colt became HIS horse.

I left my dad to sow and reap
Because MY lambs became HIS sheep.
I dropped my hoe and stuck my fork
Because MY pig became HIS pork.

The garden truck that I made grow—
'Twas HIS to sell—but MINE to hoe!
It's not the smoky atmosphere
Nor taste for "life" that brought me here.

Please tell the platform, pulpit, press,
No fear of toil or love of dress
Is driving off the farmer lads,
But just the methods of their dads.

—Reprinted from *The Phillips Town & Country Church VISITOR*

BOOK REVIEWS

Main Street on the Middle Border. By Lewis Atherton. Indiana University Press, Bloomington, Ind. 1954. $6.00.

"This book is a cultural and economic history of midwestern country towns from 1865 to 1950." The "Middle border," as defined herein, includes Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, with eastern "fringes" of Kansas, Nebraska, and the Dakotas. Professor Atherton has generally tried to treat of towns up to 5,000 people, not in the metropolitan areas.

Professor Atherton, who teaches at the University of Missouri, has lived in country towns. He both likes and dislikes them, and writes a history with perspective.

He interprets hopes and philosophies of people, drawing on varied sources, including the weekly newspapers, which are institutions of local people. "One should know the pleasure and pain of day-to-day village life." Thus he has turned to the annals of the common man.

Many country towns are growing. Indeed, in eight states of the Middlewest, the number of persons living in country towns of all sizes except 99 or less increased between 1903 and 1952. These towns are now approaching maturity.

Most of the time and money of the people is spent on "the practical," which threatens to become an end in itself instead of a means to an end. The real problem of the country town thus demands only an honest answer to the Biblical question, "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Perhaps this might be written of suburbs and small cities and the metropolitan areas, too.

Country ministers and churches are often considered. Country towns give high praise to churches and schools, and pay their preachers and teachers poorly. Protestant preachers have had a high interest in Roman Catholic "intentions." Churches have been focal points of social life, and the "social gospel," thinks this professor, has often moved out of churches into a myriad or mosaic of community organizations. He intimates that the social gospel has received a more practical expression in some organizations not labeled religious than in the churches of the Middle Border. Villagers still believe that churches "sustain law and order and property values."

"As a matter of fact, communities that opposed the social gospel movement within the church itself often expected their ministers to participate actively in lay organizations. . . . Ministers rapidly became a mainstay of service organizations and community clubs."

—Benson Y. Landis

St. Benedict and His Monks. By Theodore Maynard. P. J. Kenedy and Sons, New York. 1954. $3.00.

Mr. Maynard is a Benedictine oblate, and thus is in a special position to be an interpreter of St. Benedict as man who withdrew from the world only to have a part in remaking it. Because of the age in which the career came, the sources are relatively meager, and Mr. Maynard frequently acknowledges that the data are not definite.

The boy was greatly affected by the cruelty and violence of the men of his day. Mr. Maynard tells of the spiritual development of the young man. His university education was cut short. He had no special bent for scholarship, yet his successors have had an interest in it. They have also had, at various places in the world, a life close to the soil and have been associated with farm endeavors.

In addition to giving account of the salients of the life of the builder of Monte Cassino—which has only lately been restored on its famous site between Rome and Naples—Mr. Maynard pays much attention to the Rule which many others interested in monasticism have studied. St. Benedict closed his wording of the Rule modestly: "We have written this Rule in order that, observing it in monasteries, we may show in some measure that we have good manners and a beginning of religious life."

The Benedictine oblates are described as "men and women living in the world as ordinary Christians, but attached to a particular abbey, not, of course, bound by monastic obligations, though promising conversion of manners." Poverty and chastity are expected of them "to the degree that their state of life permits."

"One of the notable features of American Benedictinism is the great impetus it has given to what is called the Liturgical Movement, to restore the liturgy to its proper place in Catholic life." One of the well-known priories is St. John's at Collegeville, Minn.

Mr. Maynard was preparing for the ministry in England, and preaching one morning in a Unitarian pulpit, when one of his own sermons converted him to Roman Catholicism.

—B. Y. L.

Amishland. By Kiehl and Christian Newswanger. Hastings House New York. 1954. $5.00.

Vignettes of Amish life, accompanied by drawings by the authors, father and son, make up this book. The authors and artists are of the same stock as the Amish. They cherish their friendships with Amish people, and are sympathetic interpreters of these deeply religious groups who live on the land.

These brief interpretations are of the school, the farm, the auction, the wedding, etc.

The Amish, who are the most conservative of the Mennonite family of denominations, are now reported to be found in eighteen states, where they soon distinguish themselves for finding and cultivating good land and conserving the soil. Probably the Amish of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania are best known throughout the United States.

Kiehl Newswanger records that he made his first drawing of Samuel P. Stoltzfus, an Amishman, in 1920. It was a sort of naturalistic portrait, of which this book is filled.

The authors succeed well in portraying through words and drawings "the inner spirit" of the Amish.

—B. Y. L.

The Education of Migrant Children. By Shirley E. Greene. The Department of Rural Education, National Education Association, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C. $2.50 for paper binding; $3.00 for cloth binding.

This is a report of a study of educational opportunities and experiences of the children of agricultural migrants, which was initiated in 1952 by the National Council of Agricultural Life and Labor. Mr. Greene was appointed director of the project and conducted his research in four study centers: Texas, Florida, Virginia, and Illinois.

"No one really knows with any accuracy the true volume of agricultural migrancy in the United States," says Mr. Greene, but there may be as many as 600,000 children in the families of the workers who harvest the nation's crops.

The outstanding facts of the educational experience of these "children of misfortune" are retardation and frustration. In connection with these principals and teachers listed the following probable causes: "teacher overloads, overcrowding of facilities, and absenteeism." Migrant parents "do not cooperate in sending their children to school 'because they do not expect to stay long.' "

The needs pointed up in this study are: "more adequate attendance supervision; special 'helping teachers'; opportunity rooms; some teachers who speak the language of foreign-language groups; more and better health examinations, inspections and services; additional classrooms; special instruction in the use of the English language, especially oral English; more attention to personal hygiene, grooming, and manners; activities that increase the migrant's sense of belonging, self-respect and confidence; emphasis on the contributions of various cultural groups to American life; and the offering of better adapted general and technical vocational education."

An ordained Congregational Christian minister, Mr. Greene is at present the Director of Inter-group Relations of the National Farmers Union.

—R. B. R.

Recent Rural Fiction

The Dollmaker. By Harriette Arnow. Macmillan Co., New York.

A self-reliant wife and mother of a Kentucky hill farm holds firm to her beliefs and standards when uprooted and injected into the feverish life of wartime Detroit. Husband and large family of growing children mostly succumb to the hectic and gaudy ideas and habits they find prevailing and unsuccessfully try to drag the mother into the maelstrom.

One White Star. By Gladys Hasty Carroll. Macmillan Co., New York.

Relationships between the dedicated minister in this small town and his household and parishioners may not be typical, but they stimulate a remarkable development of character in the wife who seeks out worthy fields of her own.

Born a Yankee. By Grace Carstens. Macmillan Co., New York.

Ancestral possessions are all very well, but pungent Kate Fyfe had not calculated on being pressured into becoming the custodian of the oldest house on Cape Cod, working its acres like a horse, while preserving its antiques and growing into one herself. Her father forces it by willpower, but Kate has ingenuity.

Indigo Bend. By Alice Walworth Graham. Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N. Y.

Impoverished plantations near postbellum Natchez are brought back to taxpaying and subsistence possibilities by dint of unceasing thought and labor on the part of prematurely aged young people of gentle birth who are devoted to the cause of rehabilitation. Brother and sister relationship very well done.

Light as the Morning. By Bown Ingram. Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston, Mass.

TVA is fitted expertly into the woof of this narrative which, related by an adolescent lad, reflects humorously and well two contrasting although very human sons of "old Nashville families."

Good Morning, Miss Dove. By Frances Gray Patton. Dodd, Mead & Co., New York.

Far-reaching influence of the upright Miss Dove, who has taught two generations in her town with unshakable standards, is reflected in the lives of persons in all walks of life in her town and in distant parts. Flashbacks in her memory disclose the characteristics of the girls and boys from whom these men and women have developed. Might be called a feminine version of the well-know Mr. Chips.

River in the Wind. By Edith Pope. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York.

A lyrical love story of boy and girl both intensely attuned to the magic of their untamed, mystical country; but the unique Seminole wars are followed in detail. Exquisite writing here, and substantial and seldom-told history.

Many Heavens. By Virginia Sorenson. Harcourt, Brace & Co., New York.

A village and small-town nurse narrates this strange account of her apprenticeship and service chiefly as a midwife in the Mormon country. The life, past and present, of the Latter-Day Saints conditions the whole, as is true of all Mrs. Sorensen's interesting and informing novels. The book should be read with that in mind.

Swamp Angel. By Ethel Wilson. Harper & Bros., New York.

Wilderness life in Canadian hunting and fishing camp, where cooking is constant and personalities must be harmonized, has therapeutic value to Mrs. Vardoe, whose years had become restricted and hidebound. Early experience pays dividends in knowledge when needed. Descriptions of the country are subtle and memorable; characterizations are clear and distinctive.

—Prepared by Caroline B. Sherman
U.S. Department of Agriculture

Soil Stewardship Sunday

• The National Association of Soil Conservation Districts has published an attractive fifteen-page booklet entitled, "Soil Stewardship Sunday," which falls on May 15 this year—Rural Life Sunday, or Rogation Sunday.

This booklet contains excerpts from sermons delivered in different parts of the nation on the theme of soil stewardship, selected references from the Bible, and other material which it is hoped will prove helpful in preparing soil stewardship messages.

"The purpose of the Rogation Days is to implore the mercy of God that He may keep us from all evils of soul and body, and give to the plants of the field an increase. In the spring, when the fields are becoming green and there is a promise of a good harvest—but also the possibility of destruction through frost, hail, or rainstorms—we are reminded to turn with humility and confidence to the Giver of all good. In some sections of the nation the fifth Sunday after Easter is observed as Soil and Soul Sunday."

An Eleventh Commandment

In 1939, the United States government sent one of its leading soil scientists, Dr. Walter C. Lowdermilk, Associate Chief of the Soil Conservation Service, to the Near East to learn, if possible, why the vast population and flourishing cities of Biblical times had ceased to exist.

After exhaustive examinations over many thousands of miles, Dr. Lowdermilk was invited to summarize his findings. Wondering if Moses might not have added an eleventh Commandment to the Children of Israel had he been forewarned of the calamity to befall the land, he wrote what has since become known as an "Eleventh Commandment":

"Thou shalt inherit the Holy Earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect thy hills from overgrazing by thy herds, that thy descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land, thy fruitful fields shall become sterile, stony ground and wasting gullies, and thy descendants shall decrease and live in poverty or perish from off the face of the earth."

The publication, "Soil Stewardship Sunday," may be procured from your local soil conservation district office. These offices are being encouraged to get it into the hands of ministers of local parishes. Additional copies are twenty-five cents each.

Prayer for Rural Life Sunday

• O God, Creator and Lord of the universe, we give thanks for this day which celebrates the worth of our rural life.

We remember before thee all who till the soil and provide food for the world. Make us aware of our partnership with thee in this task. Give to each one the joy of seeing mysterious and creative forces at work. Restrain us from sinning against the soil which keeps us, or against the souls of those who work with us.

Fill us with that goodness which will bless the relationships in our rural communities, with the wholesomeness of true friendship and with the sustaining power of mutual helpfulness. Make us ready to see the good in our homes and to give them our best. May we have the joy of seeing our community become a place where the good of all is the goal of each.

O God, we dedicate ourselves to thee. Help us to grow into the kind of men and women we can be through thy guidance. *Amen.*

—Mark Rich

Thoughts for the Observance of Rural Life Sunday

• The farmer is the agent or the representative of society to guard and subdue the surface of the earth; and he is the agent of the divinity that made it. He must exercise his dominion with due regard to all these obligations. He is a trustee. The productiveness of the earth must increase from generation to generation; this also is his obligation. —Liberty Hyde Baile

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• To be glad of life, because it give you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look up at the stars; to be satisfied with your possessions, but not contented with yourself until you have made the best of them; to despise nothing in the world except falsehood and meanness, and to fear nothing except cowardice; to be governed by your admiration rather than by your disgusts; to covet nothing that is your neighbor's, except his kindness of heart and gentleness of manners; to think seldom of your enemies, often of your friends, and every day of Christ; and to spend as much time as you can with body and spirit in God's out-of-doors. These are little guideposts on the footpath to peace. —Henry Van Dyke

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• Though I farm with the skill of the finest of nature's husbandmen and love not the holy earth, I am become a farmer just earning a living—one unconscious of the Divine in my vocation.

Love of the holy earth does not shut out modern methods . . . it rejoices in that which is genuine and true.

—From *A Farmer's Ode to the Holy Earth,* by Kenneth A. Roadarme

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Rural Life Sunday

• Rural Life Sunday will be observed this year on May 15th. An order of service has been prepared for the Department of Town and Country Church by the Rev. W. Francis Allison, rector of St. Paul's Protestant Episcopal Church, Montrose, Pennsylvania.

Copies may be obtained from your home mission board or from the Department of Town and Country Church, National Council of Churches, 257 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y., at the following rates:

Single copies, 5 cents each; $1.50 for each 100 copies. Carriage extra on quantity orders.